

Fundraising Event Planning Timeline

6 months before event date:

- Set the date.
- Decide on a budget
- Decide on number of guests
- Identify fundraising activities for the event.
- Choose a theme.
- Choose a venue.
- Hire entertainment.

5 months before event date:

- Compile a list of potential major sponsors and begin speaking with them.
- Set table and ticket prices based on your fundraising goal.
- Select a caterer (unless venue has in-house catering).
- Develop sponsorship packages.
- Order décor.
- Design and distribute “save the date” cards/emails.

4 months before event date:

- Finalize menus and floor plans.
- Hire all vendors (A/V, security, rentals, décor, lighting, transportation).
- Choose software for registration and auction management
- Develop a marketing plan
- Hire emcee/auctioneer/host and speakers
- Solicit auction items
- Hire a photographer/ videographer and film testimonials.
- Reserve audio-visual equipment.

3 months before event date:

- Send invitations and add event to your web site.
- Check in with sponsors and finalize fulfillment
- Set up the organization’s website to accept online payment for tickets and sponsorships.
- Set event timeline (dinner, speakers, auction closing, etc).
- Design the program book.
- Design and print any signage.
- Recruit volunteers and assign event day tasks (registration, auction checkout, etc)

6 to 8 weeks before event date:

- Finalize program and video presentation.
- Package auction items and set low/high bids



1 month before event date:

- Finalize the event day timeline.
- Generate bid sheets for the auction items.
- Follow up on outstanding invoices
- Arrange transportation.
- Finalize vendor timelines.

2 weeks before event date:

- Print the menu, program, and auction books.
- Create seating assignments.
- Send final headcount of guests to venue.
- Finalize videos and other presentation elements.
- Confirm all guest names

1 week before event date:

- Finalize table assignments.
- Confirm the arrival times of vendors, speakers and VIPs.
- Confirm volunteer arrival times and assigned duties.
- Rehearse any presentations.
- Test software and devices used for auction and registration at the event.
- Prepare final payments for vendors.

1 day before the event:

- Move decorations and auction items to the venue, if possible.
- Begin to decorate, if possible.

